United Nations S/PV.6621

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6621 st meeting

Thursday, 22 September 2011, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Sleiman	(Lebanon)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Alkalaj
	Brazil	Mr. Patriota
	China	Mr. Yang Jiechi
	Colombia	Mr. Santos Calderón
	France	Mr. Juppé
	Gabon	Mr. Bongo Ondimba
	Germany	Mr. Westerwelle
	India	Mr. Krishna
	Nigeria	Mr. Jonathan
	Portugal	Mr. Coelho
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Zuma
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hague
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Conflict prevention

Report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy (S/2011/552)

Letter dated 12 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/570)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Conflict prevention

Report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy (S/2011/552)

Letter dated 12 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/570)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I warmly welcome the Heads of State and Government, the Secretary-General, Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/552, containing the report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/570, containing a letter dated 12 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as President of the Republic of Lebanon.

First, I would like to welcome the Heads of State and Government and Ministers who accepted Lebanon's invitation to participate in this high-level meeting, thereby affirming the importance of our discussion on the subject of preventive diplomacy.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the report he has prepared to enrich our discussion. He has placed preventive diplomacy, which he considers to be one of the smartest investments we can make, among the top priorities of his second term. He is right to have done so, since investing in preventive diplomacy costs far less than conflicts and their repercussions, not to mention the heavy humanitarian consequences they entail.

When addressing preventive diplomacy, we cannot but refer to the man who authored and developed this vision, the late Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, who was the first to work to integrate it into the United Nations system. The concept of preventive diplomacy has since evolved and is no longer restricted to simply pre-empting disputes before they erupt, but also aims at preventing conflicts from escalating or spreading, as described in the peace plan prepared by former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. This concept is still evolving, and now extends to consolidating the pillars of peace after conflicts end and preventing the recurrence of those conflicts.

We firmly believe that wars and conflicts are not inevitable; rather, the course of events can be influenced to prevent their eruption and escalation. However, this requires political will, mobilizing the necessary resources, and adopting a clear preventive approach that reinforces local capacities, including building national systems capable of mediating, facilitating dialogue and containing tension.

In this context, after adopting its national entente document in 1991, Lebanon has been keen to consolidate the pact and spirit of concord in its approach to major national issues, and has resorted to national dialogue conferences and committees to promote an atmosphere of calm, moderation and stability.

In general, the particular circumstances of every conflict or crisis requires carefully selected preventive diplomacy instruments, including early warning, fact-finding, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. These are all instruments to be developed and promoted within the United Nations system.

Active prevention cannot be limited to State institutions, but should also extend to civil society bodies, particularly women's and youth organizations, media, universities and research centres, which can all play an important role in promoting a culture of prevention. Moreover, we must also ensure the coordination of prevention efforts among relevant United Nations entities.

We recall the Arab Peace Initiative to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in a just and comprehensive

manner that rejects any permanent refugee status for Palestinians in the Arab countries.

It is well known that peacekeeping operations constitute one of the tools of preventive diplomacy. Although they are conducted after a conflict erupts, they are highly important in containing the conflict and preventing it from spreading. This has been our own experience. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has, since its establishment in 1978, helped the Lebanese State to extend its sovereignty throughout its territory.

Similarly, the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), to which Lebanon is committed, was necessary to put an end to the destructive war Israel waged against Lebanon in 2006. The international community, in keeping with the requirements and objectives of preventive diplomacy, should strive to compel Israel to implement the resolution's provisions by fully withdrawing from all Lebanese territories and ceasing its threats and daily violations of Lebanon's sovereignty by land, sea and air.

Indeed, the conflict between Lebanon and Israel would not have escalated since 19 March 1978, the date resolution 425 (1978) was adopted, nor would the resistance have emerged and confronted the Israeli occupation, had the international community compelled Israel to fully implement that resolution, which clearly called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of its armed forces from all Lebanese territories. We need practical measures to guarantee that binding Security Council resolutions are implemented.

Preventive diplomacy cannot be fully successful unless we address the root causes of problems. The roots of terrorism must be addressed. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and reaffirm our commitment to fighting that scourge. Conflict prevention also calls for economic and social justice, as well as the establishment of a fairer and more equitable international economic and financial order that is better aligned with moral values and based less on speculation.

Finally, during its presidency of the Security Council last May, Lebanon pointed to dialogue among civilizations as a tool of preventive diplomacy. In this context, we emphasize that dialogue, communication and openness to others are the most important weapons against fanaticism, extremism, prejudice and hatred.

It is therefore clear that promoting a culture of peace will contribute to conflict prevention. The Preamble to the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states that it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed. Undoubtedly, the culture of peace cannot be separated from the culture of justice, without which no real or permanent peace can be achieved.

Talking about preventive diplomacy is much easier than implementing it. Furthermore, history records and at times even glorifies the wars and tragedies waged and caused by leaders more than those they manage to avert. Let us unite our efforts to create a world governed by the values of equality, justice and respect for others.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Preventive diplomacy's time has come once again. I am grateful to the presidency of Lebanon and to President Sleiman for this opportunity to take stock and chart the way forward. I also want to thank Nigeria, which helped re-energize and refocus our discussion on this issue during its presidency in July 2010.

When I took office almost five years ago, it was clear to me that we needed to raise our ability to act early and preventively against emerging threats to an entirely new level. Building on the ideas and accomplishments of my predecessors, I saw significant untapped potential for what we could help achieve through preventive diplomacy. We have sought to reinforce our missions abroad, strengthen our envoys and their teams, improve our expertise, deepen our partnerships and reshape the Department of Political Affairs to make this vision a reality.

Today, preventive diplomacy is being conducted by a broader array of actors, including regional and civil society organizations, using a wider and more innovative range of tools. There is growing global support for prevention, coupled with the creation of new preventive capacities in multilateral organizations and Member States. The pace, intensity and increasing professionalization of our preventive efforts are beginning to pay off. We have used diplomacy to

ensure a peaceful referendum in the Sudan, a democratic transition in Guinea, and an end to the violence in Kenya and Kyrgyzstan. From Afghanistan to the Middle East, from West Africa to the Sudan and Somalia, our missions are carrying out preventive diplomacy every day, helping to sustain complex political, peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes.

However, we still have a long way to go. Violent conflict continues to wreak a shocking toll on individuals, societies and economies. Every day, we can see the costs of the failure to prevent. Despite recent advances, preventive diplomacy continues to face long odds and numerous challenges. A critical factor is political will. If the parties do not want peace or are unwilling to compromise, it is extraordinarily difficult to persuade them or impose it from the outside.

For this and other familiar reasons, we are still too often unable to act until a situation visibly deteriorates. But this should not deter us from trying to resolve underlying tensions and, when conflict does erupt, to stop its spread and mitigate the damage it can cause.

My report (S/2011/552) outlines several areas of focus. First, we must prioritize early action. Too often, we find ourselves scrambling to manage emergencies that could have been prevented from spiralling out of control in the first place. It is incumbent on all of us — Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations — to act early and decisively. The Security Council can do much to address an emerging threat, whether or not it is on its formal agenda, precisely to avoid it ending up there. I or my representatives come before this Council virtually every day to talk about conflicts we are trying to resolve.

Secondly, we must continue to invest in and better equip the women and men who lead our preventive diplomacy efforts on the ground.

Thirdly, while prevention is infinitely cheaper than cure and is one of the smartest, most cost-effective investments we can make, it still needs adequate investment if it is to deliver results. At the same time, we will continue to maximize the impact of the resources we already have.

Fourthly, we must further strengthen our strategic partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. In crisis situations, we must be able to decide quickly on who can do what to help. Sometimes, preventive diplomacy is getting the international community to speak with one voice. The Security Council has a key role to play in that regard.

Finally, we must continue to support national institutions and mechanisms for mediation and dialogue. Including civil society organizations, especially women and youth who can lead the charge for peaceful change, in preventive efforts is critical.

Preventive diplomacy may not be effective in all situations. Uncertainty, risks and evolving challenges come with the terrain. Yet I firmly believe that better preventive diplomacy is not an option; it is a necessity. Prevention will remain a fundamental priority in my second term as Secretary-General. I count on the support of Member States, regional organizations, civil society and other partners. I know that this is what they expect of me, and it is what people everywhere expect of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President of the Republic of Colombia, to take the floor.

President Santos Calderón (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on having assumed the presidency of the Security Council and convened this high-level meeting, which highlights the commitment of your Government to the high aims of international peace and welfare. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his valuable report (S/2011/552) and for his briefing today, both of which enlighten us about the actions and accomplishments of the United Nations in the field of preventive diplomacy.

Colombia is pleased and grateful for the Security Council's decision to consider as a main topic of debate that of conflict prevention through the peaceful settlement of disputes, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Our task today is to ensure that the means for the prevention and settlement of disputes become ever more agile and efficient. We should not underestimate any of these means; each has virtues of its own and they all have the same purpose.

I would like to stress, however, that some are especially useful, in particular the less formal means for dispute settlement, such as good offices and

mediation. The intrinsic advantages of mediation are evident if one looks at international practice. The mediator must enjoy the parties' trust. Without trust, there is no point in even setting the process in motion. This is why the existence of conditions conducive to reaching agreement is essential if mediation is to proceed smoothly.

A recent experience in our region was the successful mediation carried out by Colombia and Venezuela in order to assure the return of Honduras to the Organization of American States and to contribute to resolving the crisis that arose in that nation in 2009.

Today more than ever before, the recognized leadership of institutions, Governments and high-profile personalities, both in the world arena and in the regional sphere, has a role to play in contributing to the attainment of peace through good offices and mediation. By the same token, international organizations should encourage and promote these processes. We are referring, of course, to mediation processes between States in which the United Nations carries out its mandate, and not to situations involving illegal actors who act outside the system and even against it. We are talking about mediation that works, that sets goals and time limits, and is useful in ending conflicts, not in perpetuating them.

We share the Secretary-General's assessment in his 2009 report (S/2009/189) that is surprising that although mediation has demonstrated its effectiveness as a means for the settlement of disputes, it has attracted little attention and has not drawn many resources from the United Nations system. That is why we were pleased with the recent adoption of a General Assembly resolution (resolution 65/283) that strengthens the role of mediation in conflict prevention and resolution. That document is destined to become the roadmap of mediation.

In international disputes, just as with one's health, it is always better to prevent than to correct. The most propitious moment to resolve a dispute is when it is just emerging, before it starts escalating. For this reason, the early intervention by the United Nations or regional organizations and even the good offices of certain countries in regional settings are fundamental for the prevention and settlement of conflicts.

I also want to stress the important role that regional organizations and arrangements can play in this context, as recognized in Chapter VIII of the Charter. This has been acknowledged by the Security Council on numerous occasions, most recently in today's meeting.

When the Security Council acts under Chapter VII, the dispute has already acquired such proportions that it is more complex and more difficult to solve, so much so that the Council is empowered to impose sanctions and even to authorize the use of force. It would be ideal not to have to resort to Chapter VII, and therefore we must make every effort to strengthen preventive diplomacy and make it more efficient and more agile.

The Charter provides us with all the proper tools to do that, such as direct negotiations, good offices, mediation, fact-finding, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement, as well as the possibility to call upon the parties to settle their disputes by pacific means and to suggest and recommend procedures for adjustment. We only have to decide to use these mechanisms and this power.

I want to conclude my intervention by making a call to the Council that we assume our responsibilities with a long-term vision. Let us take off the shelf these instruments for prevention and settlement of disputes provided for in Chapter VI of the Charter and put them into practice.

More prevention and less intervention: this must be our common goal, and this is the proposal and invitation that Colombia is making.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa, to take the floor.

President Zuma: We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely debate, which allows us to further explore ways to strengthen and consolidate preventive diplomacy. We also thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for the report (S/2011/552) on which it was based.

In our view, the theme of this year's Security Council summit complements the theme of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, which is "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means". It proves that the United Nations in its entirety is focused on the primary objectives and principles of the Charter. Preventive diplomacy is anchored in the Charter of the United Nations. Article

33 specifically provides for the pacific settlement of disputes.

In 2005, during the world summit, world leaders reaffirmed this principle in the Millennium Declaration by stating: "We are determined to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter" (General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 5).

Today we gather once again in this Council to recommit ourselves to the noble objective of international peace and its achievement through preventive diplomacy. In fact, the necessity for preventive diplomacy has been reaffirmed by this Council many times before. Last July, under the presidency of Nigeria, the Council acknowledged the importance of a peaceful settlement of disputes. In September last year, under the Turkish presidency, the Council at summit level stressed that "the comprehensive and coherent use of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding tools is important in creating the conditions for sustainable peace" (see S/PRST/2010/18).

It is a fact that preventive diplomacy initiatives are more cost-effective than the deployment of peacekeepers once a conflict has broken out. Thus preventive diplomacy is an effective tool at our disposal. To succeed, it requires a sustained injection of resources. This will enable the United Nations to plan and deploy in a timely manner appropriate human and financial resources in potential conflict situations.

We welcome the progress that has already been made by the United Nations through a plethora of initiatives. These include the Secretary-General's good offices, special envoys, the establishment of an early warning system, the deployment of special political missions and of the Mediation Support Unit, the deployment of country teams and regional offices, as well as other diplomatic initiatives aimed at preventing conflicts.

While these fulfil a central role in conflict prevention, it is our opinion that a great deal can still be done, especially through utilizing the unique capacities and experiences that regional organizations provide. The Security Council has often stressed the importance of partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In that regard, we appreciate the efforts undertaken by such regional organizations as the Organization of American States, the Union of South American Nations and the African Union (AU), to name but a few.

With regard to the African Union specifically, it is important to note that since its inception, in 2002, it has established and consolidated a comprehensive Peace and Security Architecture. The Architecture is based on a paradigm that recognizes preventive diplomacy, post-conflict reconstruction and development as central to eradicating conflicts on our continent. These mechanisms that the African Union has put in place bear witness to the commitment of our continent in addressing peace and security challenges in a comprehensive manner.

The African Union has also made great strides in developing its early-warning systems that help the organization to determine which countries are likely to lapse or relapse into conflict. These mechanisms afford the organization the opportunity to avert an imminent conflict. However, for these systems to be effective, early warning should be followed by early action.

In our subregion, the Southern African Development Community continues to play a critical role in ensuring subregional peace and stability. In that context, its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has undertaken numerous preventive efforts in quelling potential conflicts. It has also spent a great deal of energy and resources in resolving conflicts through dialogue and mediation, such as in Madagascar.

Moreover, it is essential that the efforts of both the African Union and the numerous subregional organizations across the continent working on preventive diplomacy be respected and supported by the United Nations and the international community as a whole. In fact, the Security Council has adopted several decisions in which it expresses its intention to build a strong partnership with the African Union in that regard.

However, over the past few months, we have seen that partnership falter as the African Union has been undermined in its preventive diplomatic efforts, in cases such as Côte d'Ivoire, the Sudan and Libya. Especially in the case of Libya, the AU initiative to ensure a political rather than military solution to the Libyan crisis was deliberately undermined in spite of the decision set forth in resolution 1973 (2011) to support the African Union road map. Such blatant acts of disregard for regional initiatives have the potential

to undermine the confidence that regional organizations have in the United Nations as an impartial and widely respected mediator in conflicts.

Although conflict prevention remains the primary responsibility of Member States, civil society also has a role to play. In addition, it remains imperative that the international community, and the United Nations in particular, provides support to local or national conflict prevention mechanisms. These efforts can be executed without negating the important principles of the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

Most important, we must bear in mind the link between development and security. Prevention will be optimized if the root causes of conflicts are addressed effectively. As the 2011 *World Development Report*, on conflict, security and development, reminds us, the root causes of conflict in the majority of instances are related to a lack of resources or unequal development or distribution of often scarce resources.

For the international community to address those causes effectively, strengthened and enhanced cooperation and information-sharing between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, are required. Furthermore, there is an essential need for greater coherence, coordination and interaction between the various United Nations organs and other international organizations, such as the international financial institutions. Furthermore, Member States should share their experiences in building the United Nations capacity in preventive diplomacy.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution in conflict prevention diplomacy. We should be open to consider important elements that can contribute to the prevention of conflicts, including cultural orientation, local preferences and local expertise in developing strategies aimed at preventive diplomacy.

In that regard, the full and effective participation of women at all levels and stages of the prevention of conflict, as well as in all aspects of the peaceful settlement and resolution of disputes, is critical. We therefore reiterate our appreciation for the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as an institution that acknowledges the need to enhance the role of women in all aspects of life and in society, including preventive diplomacy.

In conclusion, South Africa supports the draft presidential statement before us, as we believe that it makes a significant contribution to our preventive diplomacy efforts and to the execution of the Council's mandate to uphold and preserve international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to take the floor.

President Jonathan: On behalf of the Government and the people of Nigeria, I wish to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this crucial meeting to review the United Nations efforts in the area of conflict prevention. Nigeria considers it a subject of critical importance to all humanity. I want also to commend the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in this regard and for the incisive and comprehensive report (S/2011/552), which has been invaluable in presenting a persuasive case in all ramifications for preventive diplomacy.

When Nigeria convened the open debate on preventive diplomacy in July 2010 (6360th meeting), we were motivated by a profound concern that the nature of conflict was outpacing our collective ability to respond effectively to it. For so long, the international community has accorded little attention to mediation and preventive diplomacy. We have placed far too much emphasis on and devoted too many resources to the military dimensions of peace and security without addressing the root causes of conflicts.

The report before us today indicates that this trend was not strictly a result of failure to utilize preventive strategies, but was principally due to inadequate resourcing and coordination. The immediate challenge before us must be how to address these key questions.

Africa has, over the years, placed a great deal of political weight on the application of preventive diplomacy strategies by putting in place early warning and mediation mechanisms. The African Union took bold steps to develop a framework for preventive diplomacy through the efforts of the African Union Peace and Security Council.

At the subregional level, the Economic Community of West African States has also made great strides in this area, primarily through the steady

implementation of its conflict prevention framework encompassing diplomacy, fact-finding and early warning systems. It is imperative, therefore, that these efforts at regional and subregional levels be supported both financially and technically by the international community and the United Nations system.

Today, a number of effective contact points have been developed within the United Nations system for these collaborative arrangements, especially through the Secretary-General's special envoys, the Department of Political Affairs, United Nations regional offices and the Peacebuilding Commission. As the Secretary-General aptly observed, working with relevant partners has created enabling environments in easing tensions, building capacities for skilled interventions and fostering dialogue.

Indeed, Nigeria has invested resources to support the campaign for preventive diplomacy, especially within our subregion. We have adopted the use of preventive diplomacy in addressing complex questions arising from armed conflicts.

It is therefore encouraging to note that the Secretary-General has established a steering committee to consider measures for enhancing cooperation across the network of preventive diplomacy actors. In real terms, preventive diplomacy is often most effective when conducted behind the scenes, certainly well before tensions rise to boiling point level. We believe we can foster the growth of conflict prevention at both normative and practical levels. We can standardize our approach to political and peacekeeping missions to reflect the strategic importance of preventive diplomacy.

If indeed our primary responsibility in this Council is to maintain international peace and security, the work of the Council in managing international peace and security should be viewed through the lens of preventive diplomacy. If we are able to assist nations and communities in restoring their social and institutional fabric, if we can also apply ourselves to the ongoing task of providing opportunities for people and their livelihood, we can go a long way in reducing opportunities for conflict. We can directly and indirectly prevent conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, to take the floor.

President Ondimba (*spoke in French*): In a world that remains prey to conflict, preventive diplomacy is a crucial issue that inspires hope and that my country considers highly important. I therefore wish, Mr. President, to commend the positive initiative taken by your country, Lebanon, in organizing this debate. I welcome the participation of a number of eminent persons in the debate. I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his report (S/2011/552) and his informative contribution.

In the past two decades, the world has seen a resurgence of armed conflict, which we thought had disappeared at the end of the cold war. Those conflicts, largely intra-ethnic and sometimes both ethnic and religious in origin, caused thousands of deaths and internally displaced persons. They also caused significant material damage to the economic fabric and jeopardized hope for development.

Faced with that situation, the United Nations has, since publication in 1992 of the Agenda for Peace by former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, very specifically defined its role and responsibilities in the settlement of conflict situations. That role involves both peacekeeping operations and preventive diplomacy.

At the 2005 world summit, we solemnly renewed our commitment to promote a culture of preventing armed conflict, on order to effectively take on the interdependent challenges of security and development. For that, we deemed it necessary to strengthen United Nations capacities in the prevention of armed conflict.

For its part, the Security Council, under the terms of resolution 1625 (2005), emphasized the need to adopt a comprehensive strategy on prevention of armed conflict that would take into account their root causes. From that perspective, we had to strengthen and develop strategic partnerships, to ensure the development of prevention mechanisms and allocation of resources to preventive diplomacy. However, we must do even more.

Our collective security requires a greater mobilization of our common efforts. In that regard it is more necessary than ever to bolster already existing partnerships in the area of conflict prevention. It seems encouraging to us that the United Nations has considered this imperative in recent decades. Here we welcome the increasingly frequent dispatch of mediators, emissaries and joint United Nations-African

Union peace missions, as was the case for the Sudan. That type of partnership, as called for under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, merits further development. In fact, a good understanding of conditions on the ground where regional arrangements operate is an indispensable asset for the success of actions conducted in the framework of preventive diplomacy.

We also believe that the United Nations and regional organizations could widely exploit traditional mechanisms for conflict prevention. We would also benefit from greater involvement of civil society and especially women's organizations in the prevention and resolution of disputes.

With respect to support for regional preventative mechanisms, we urge that the United Nations, particularly through its Office to the African Union, contribute to strengthening the African architecture for the maintenance of peace, where preventative mechanisms should have pride of place. In that regard, regional organizations should be assisted in building up their early-warning systems. Such systems are important tools for conflict prevention, if only because early detection means prompt action, as was the case in the crises in Kenya and Madagascar.

To a large extent, the success of conflict prevention will also depend on making use of all the advantages that it offers and taking into consideration the specificities of each conflict situation. We remain convinced that investing in conflict prevention — such as mediation, analysis and assessment of conflict risk — will make a significant contribution to preventing disputes from becoming armed confrontations. The work of the Peacebuilding Commission in countries emerging from conflict also plays a role.

In Central Africa we have put in place not only channels of cooperation through confidence-building measures, but also a subregional mechanism for the detection of preliminary signs of conflict, which we call the Central African Early Warning Mechanism, the headquarters of which is in my country. We will ensure that that tool establishes a true partnership with the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, mostly by supporting capacity-building in conflict prevention for countries of the subregion.

The performance of our systems of preventive diplomacy must be based on enhanced human resources. Preventive diplomacy initiatives must also enjoy predictable financing if we are to maximize our chances for success. Such initiatives represent a possible future solution that is more certain and less costly than peacekeeping operations of the past.

We welcome the fact that economic and financial institutions are now grasping the connection between peace and development. It is important to strengthen partnerships with those institutions, so that they participate in a more significant way in diplomatic efforts in conflict prevention. The publication of a document by the World Bank on this issue is eloquent proof of the interest our development partners take in questions of peace and security.

To produce the desired results, our efforts at preventive diplomacy will require of the parties to a dispute a manifest will and a genuine commitment to a political solution to the dispute. International judicial arbitration is also a possibility, if the parties are willing to submit to it and to abide by its rulings, as was the case with Nigeria and Cameroon in the Bakassi case.

In conclusion, in spite of all the options we could contemplate to detect potential conflicts, any success risks being limited if particular focus is not put on the need to attack the underlying causes of conflict. Governments must, in developing their own national preventive mechanisms, have the courage to maintain an ongoing dialogue with all national stakeholders and to respect the rules of good governance. The peace, cohesion and stability of States also depend on that dialogue and respect.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Pedro Passos Coelho, Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal, to take the floor.

Mr. Coelho (Portugal) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, President Sleiman, for the conduct of the Lebanese presidency of the Security Council and especially for the organization of this debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his excellent report (S/2011/552), which provides us with concrete avenues of action through which to make the preventive work of the Security Council more efficient.

We are considering a very timely theme today. A broad consensus exists as to the merits and utility of a culture of prevention that allows us to identify crises

before they transform into conflicts, with all the human and material costs that such conflicts always levy. It is therefore time to transform that consensus into concrete actions that ensure, moving forward, that the Security Council uses the preventive instruments at its disposal in a better, more systematic manner.

The international community faces new obstacles to peaceful coexistence among peoples that challenge the stability of whole regions. As Portugal recognizes the central role played by the Security Council in this area, we inscribed on the agenda of our presidency of the Council, this November, a meeting on new challenges to international peace and security. We intend to promote an integrated vision that mirrors the many challenges we face in the twenty-first century.

Today, no one questions the interlinkages among those challenges. Security is now also related to sustainable development, climate, energy, epidemics, food security and access to water and basic commodities. Indeed, what we used to characterize as the roots of a conflict are very much at the surface today, with a more direct and proportional impact on our security and well-being. It is also important to mention positive experiences in the field of shared natural resources. Portugal has such a positive experience in what regards the management of shared water resources with our neighbour, Spain.

The United Nations represents a forum of excellence for the debate on the broader concept of security. We therefore see our discussions here today as a value-added contribution to our meeting in November. Preventive diplomacy is a central principle of Portugal's foreign policy. We have actively supported Security Council initiatives that seek to promote a better understanding of the causes of conflict and that seek to discuss options to overcome those obstacles, as was the case, for example, in the tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We have sought for those initiatives also to reflect the priority that we accord to the promotion and protection of human rights, humanitarian issues and the protection of civilians. Moreover, we want to do so while also promoting a closer collaboration with non-governmental organizations and a better coordination of efforts among the United Nations missions, the European Union and the African Union. It is that integrated vision of security — based on complementarity, synergy and cooperation — that should be encouraged, so as to strengthen the cohesi of the international system.

We greatly appreciate, Mr. President, the mo useful concept paper presented by your delegati (S/2011/570, annex), in which the key issues of th debate are encapsulated, including the importance identifying the factors leading to tension, be th political, cultural, socio-economic or environmental nature.

The United Nations has at its disposal the mea to promote timely detection and early warning conflicts, thereby avoiding the unnecessa degeneration of tensions into open conflict. I think it necessary to refine the relationship between the mar relevant organs and organizations, thereby promoting culture of prevention that allows for the maintenanc and consolidation of peace in an integrated — rath than sequential — manner.

Preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping an peacebuilding are a complementary triumvirate tha together guarantee the emergence of sustainable peac It is not enough to make peace; it is also necessary t help it take root and grow. That is certainly a mor difficult task, especially as it is intimately linked to th rule of law and socio-economic development. Securit and development are, however, two sides of the sam coin.

I would like, in this context, to highlight the worl of the Peacebuilding Commission, in whose foundin Portugal was proud to participate. During the 201 review process of the Peacebuilding Commission, it preventive role was clearly underlined. Th Peacebuilding Commission has played a central role i linking peace and security with economic and socia development and with humanitarian efforts. Th country-specific configurations of the Peacebuildin Commission for West Africa, of which Portugal is part, are concrete examples of that function in action.

We believe that peacekeeping operations can an should assume functions of early peacebuilding, in th areas of security-sector reform, justice and th correctional system, as well as in processes o disarmament, demining and reintegration. Thos fundamental actions complement and reinforce th socio-economic reconstruction undertaken by othe actors. I think that the positive experiences in th Balkans and in Timor-Leste are clear in this respect

inspiring also possible solutions that are appropriate for Libya.

For these reasons, Portugal has sought to maintain an active participation in peacekeeping operations, a principle that we will continue to honour to the greatest extent possible.

I have highlighted the importance of an integrated vision of security, in an international framework of complementarity, cooperation and synergy. It is essential that the links between the United Nations and other regional and international organizations be strengthened, consolidating or even institutionalizing the lines of dialogue and communication. The actions of one or another are always strengthened when influential actors collaborate. Knowledge of the situation and the actors on the ground is irreplaceable, and for that reason Portugal has continuously defended the participation of regional organizations such as the African Union or the Arab League as part of a more robust preventive diplomacy.

Allow me also to highlight here the efforts that we have made in the context of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries to strengthen the preventive element and support those of us that are in situations of fragility.

The European Union, naturally, also has a role to play in this context. The panoply of instruments that the Union has at its disposal can and should be used to complement the actions of the United Nations, thereby mutually supporting their respective efforts for preventive diplomacy.

The work of regional and international organizations in conflict prevention cannot in any way be seen as a substitute for the principle of national ownership. National capabilities and capacities and the support given to their consolidation must serve as the foundation for preventive diplomacy, thereby catalysing national strategies for the promotion of peace.

Ultimately, the responsibility to prevent conflict must lie with national institutions; otherwise, there is a risk that the solutions that are found may not be consistent or sustainable in the long run. Conflict prevention should also be based on an inclusive approach in which new civil society actors must also participate. It is important to catalyse partnerships between all relevant actors: civil society, parliaments, academic institutions and women's and youth organizations, as well as the labour and business community.

Their presence on the ground and their very nature and objectives make them particularly useful and appropriate agents to warn of possible nascent conflicts and to help find mutually acceptable solutions. Their involvement is the best guarantee of the success of preventive diplomacy, and this, in our opinion, is the concept of security that should prevail in this era of globalization and interdependence.

Today we have a much clearer perception of the challenges facing international peace and security than we did a decade ago. We also have a better understanding of the instruments necessary to meet these challenges.

The Arab world is undergoing an unprecedented transformation that will have many geopolitical consequences that are not yet fully understood or defined but that certainly transcend the regional dimension. The response of the international community to that transformation is, and will continue to be, crucial to ensure the success of political transitions as well as international peace, stability and security.

I am particularly heartened to highlight democratic and inclusive pluralism, efforts to strengthen civil society, the opening of society and the economy, respect for the rule of law and human rights as essential elements of this transformation.

Preventive diplomacy is certainly part of this process, and its relevance is indisputable. For that reason, it gives me great pride to participate in a debate where we celebrate this fact.

Allow me to conclude by renewing and strengthening Portugal's commitment to the promotion of peace and security and to continuing to strengthen preventive diplomacy.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite Mr. William Hague, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, to take the floor.

Mr. Hague (United Kingdom): The resolve and effectiveness of the United Nations is tested whenever lives are threatened. When conflict looms, the world looks to the United Nations for a decisive response to

prevent violence through agile and creative diplomacy, to stop aggression, to end conflict when it does happen and then to help keep the peace, and be prepared to stay the course so that fragile countries do not lapse back into war.

I think we have shown this year that the United Nations can take a lead in saving life and protecting civilians. In Libya, we mustered legitimate diplomatic, economic and military pressure to prevent a regime from waging war against its people and to deter its members from committing crimes. Our swift action prevented a humanitarian catastrophe, saving the lives of thousands of civilians. It led many to abandon the Al-Qadhafi regime, so hastening its demise, and it allowed the Libyan people to seize the opportunity to determine their future.

In Côte d'Ivoire, acting with the unanimous support of the Security Council, United Nations peacekeepers undertook limited military operations to protect civilians. The United Nations demonstrated zero tolerance for attacks against civilians and United Nations peacekeepers and for the desperate acts of a ruler seeking to cling to power against the wishes of the people.

These experiences hold lessons for us as we seek to improve the role of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, because the first lesson is that the will to act is the vital ingredient in conflict prevention. Without international will and leadership, we risk failing in our duty to uphold international peace and security, giving comfort to the perpetrators of crimes while causing victims to despair.

The increasing frequency of internal conflicts rather than conflicts between States presents different challenges but does not remove our responsibility to protect the civilian population. The impact of conflict is devastating and is not confined within national borders. Lives are lost, people displaced, trade links severed, economies crippled, and crime and terrorism can flourish. The consequences are a burden on us all and a danger to all.

We have a responsibility to use all the means available to the United Nations to prevent conflict and to ensure that it does not escalate. We must encourage sustainable peace through mediation and dialogue, through support to local conflict-prevention efforts, or through more coercive measures, as the situation demands. Military action may be necessary, as has proved the case in Libya, but it is a last resort and is appropriate only in certain circumstances. Britain is not calling for this, for instance, in the case of Syria.

The second lesson is that actions to prevent conflict must have a strong legal basis and attract regional support, as we did in Libya working with the Arab League and with a clear United Nations resolution. We must also work with the grain of the societies we are dealing with, recognizing that each situation is different and that we cannot impose solutions. Such legitimacy and wide support, themselves the product of diplomacy, must always be our goal, even when in the short term this can make it harder for nations to act.

The third lesson is that we must develop our capacity to anticipate and react to developing conflict, both as individual countries and here at the United Nations. The United Kingdom is now placing great emphasis on effective conflict prevention. This means not waiting for problems to become crises but using our network of embassies as an early-warning system and our role in international organizations to help resolve disputes and create agreements.

We know that development is an indispensable component of conflict prevention, so in Britain we will not retreat an inch from our commitment to spend more of our national income on development. We are enshrining in our law our promise to spend 0.7 per cent of our national income on alleviating poverty elsewhere and ensuring that an increasing proportion of it contributes to conflict prevention. By 2015, 30 per cent of our official development aid will support fragile and conflict-affected areas.

In the United Kingdom, we are also using our new National Security Council to become better at anticipating conflict, and we can share our analysis with others. We also emphasize the need for strategic patience in supporting States that are emerging from conflict. Our experiences from the western Balkans to the Horn of Africa show that a hard-won peace must be preserved and not taken for granted. To cement peace, it often takes generations, and so where we are engaged, we must guard against turning our attention and resources away too soon.

Looking forward, I believe that we must apply these three lessons — political will and leadership, international legitimacy and investment in conflict prevention — to the immediate challenges we face.

Each case will be different, but we need to apply conflict prevention efforts in a way that is flexible and according to our best ability to influence the situation on the ground.

For instance, in Syria the United Kingdom believes that a response from the Security Council is long overdue. The time has come for a resolution demanding an end to violence and real political reform that applies effective pressure on the Syrian authorities to this end. The consequences of inaction would weigh heavily upon us if we were to turn a blind eye to killings, abuses and repression.

In Libya, we must support the National Transitional Council's efforts to rebuild the State and chart a new course for its country. I welcome the Council's decision last week to mandate a United Nations mission for Libya. Attention must now be given to the United Nations role in coordinating international efforts at the request of the Libyan Government and in support of its own plans.

In the Sudan, we must work more effectively to establish a strong position to respond to the worrying levels of violence in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile state. And in Yemen, the United Nations should continue to use its good offices to help mediate a peaceful settlement and an end to the appalling violence. In parallel, we must intensify our work to build up the United Nations capacity for preventive diplomacy. This means greater cooperation between United Nations agencies to identify threats and the regular attention of the Security Council on countries at risk.

We support the United Nations increasing use of mediation specialists and special envoys, and we welcome the Secretary-General's call to increase the number of senior female mediators in line with resolution 1325 (2000). Above all, United Nations Member States must be prepared to invest early on in supporting fragile States where requested, as well as to react rapidly when a crisis arises. Such preventive action saves lives, protects fundamental human rights and helps preserve peace. These are indeed our essential tasks.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Alain Juppé, Minister of State for Foreign and European Affairs of the French Republic, to take the floor.

Mr. Juppé (France) (*spoke in French*): Preventive diplomacy — which was a mere concept half a century ago, until formalized by former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his 1992 report An Agenda for Peace (S/24111) — has become an essential means of action within the United Nations. The stakes are clearly identified at the very heart of our Charter. The method for preventing the emergence or exacerbation of conflicts has been equally well identified: early warning and speedy action; the need for dialogue, mediation and partnerships; and a long-term vision. Preventive diplomacy also seeks to stabilize social relationships so that peace can be built. This concern, as stipulated in the report of 17 June 1992,

> "to ease tensions before they result in conflict — or, if conflict breaks out, to act swiftly to contain it and resolve its underlying causes" (*S/24111, para. 23*).

Now that our Council faces increasingly complex crises, I believe that it would be useful to ask ourselves what preventive diplomacy can bring to our current actions. I would like to thank the Lebanese presidency for having provided us with this opportunity to share our considerations and views. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his excellent report (S/2011/552).

Our Council holds the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and must therefore be the key actor in the field of preventive diplomacy. This role is translated first and foremost in the deployment of peacekeeping operations, which contribute to preventing the escalation of conflicts. It also requires taking action as early as possible in order to prevent emergent conflicts from deteriorating.

In that regard, I endorse the statement by Mr. Hague to the effect that our Council should adopt as soon as possible a resolution condemning the repression in Syria, which is taking on increasingly intolerable forms as the regime is now attacking children in their schools, according to the very reliable information we receive from our ambassadors.

The concept, means of action and expectations of preventive diplomacy have also broadened in scope. The Council now has new tools at its disposal. It is no longer merely about keeping the peace in conflict areas; it is about intervening before a crisis even breaks out. That is the purpose of the informal procedures for

monitoring high-risk areas — our so-called informal interactive dialogues — which seek to anticipate and, above all, to respond as rapidly as possible. Moreover, the assessments undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs and the information provided by mediators and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General are invaluable, as they shed light on local situations, which are always complex.

Fortunately, the Council is not alone in its involvement. Within the United Nations itself, numerous institutions have actively developed preventive diplomacy tools. I cite two examples. Through its Education for Sustainable Development programme, UNESCO has harnessed education in the service of conflict prevention and the fight against insecurity. The United Nations Development Programme is equally involved in this area, inter alia, through its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, which has been implemented in a number of African countries and seeks to reintegrate former combatants into local economies. To that end, it provides specific support to post-conflict countries.

Above and beyond the United Nations, the main regional organizations have also used this instrument. These organizations include the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the African Union. I have in mind, too, the actions undertaken by the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community in Madagascar.

I also stress the role played by non-governmental organizations. There are too many examples to enumerate here, but each and every one of them, by working to forge more peaceful and harmonious societies, is contributing to conflict prevention.

Preventive diplomacy must also prepare for the challenges of the future. Indeed, we must address the root causes of crises, as a number of speakers have said. It is a question no longer merely of preventing conflict, but of maintaining or even recreating the conditions for peace. That is the preventive strategy that the Secretary-General has called "structural", consisting of adopting an array of measures — not only political, but also social, cultural, economic and even environmental — that help reduce the factors contributing to conflict.

Thus, in Guinea and Niger, post-transition electoral processes that could have given rise to confrontation were concluded through the joint involvement of the various Special Representatives of the United Nations, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States. With respect to the crisis in Madagascar, France has supported the efforts of the mediator of the Southern African Development Community.

I should like in particular to emphasize the environmental dimension of crises, which I have no doubt will grow even further in the years to come. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, 40 per cent of the conflicts of the past 60 years are rooted in issues involving natural resources, be it timber, oil, arable land or water.

What will happen tomorrow, when 10 billion people are living on the planet? Let us be frank. The United Nations still lacks tools that could help it prevent incipient catastrophe. In the absence of a strong multilateral entity, future strife over resources or commodities is likely to be resolved bilaterally, to the detriment of the weakest, and on the basis of force.

We must rectify that situation by reforming international environmental governance. The upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development will be a singular opportunity to register progress in this field and to lay the foundation for a global organization for the environment. We must seize that opportunity.

Resolving crises is the duty of our Council, as is preventing them. France believes that preventive diplomacy in all its aspects is a key element of the just and effective governance to which my country aspires with all its heart.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite Her Excellency Ms. Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States of America and member of President Obama's Cabinet, to take the floor.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): Thank you, President Sleiman, for Lebanon's leadership in bringing us together today to discuss this very important subject.

The late Dag Hammarskjöld pursued a vision of a United Nations that would move from what he said was a "culture of reaction to a culture of prevention". That

unfinished task lies before us today. Some 1.5 billion people now live in countries shaken by conflict, and few of those countries will see even one of the Millennium Development Goals met.

The World Bank's annual *World Development Report* puts the cost of the average civil war at some $65 billion, or just over half of the global aid budget. While recent years have seen an unparalleled drop in global poverty, countries devastated by conflict and violence have been left out of that trend. Poverty is a major driver of conflict. Let me highlight just one statistic. In countries where the average person earns only $250 per year — the poorest of nations — the scientifically proven risk of civil conflict within a five-year time frame is 15 per cent. By contrast, in countries with a per capita income of $5,000 per year — middle-income countries — the risk of civil conflict over the same five-year period is less than 1 per cent. Economic growth and development must therefore be viewed as key to our strategies for preventing conflict.

It is especially difficult to prevent violence in societies struggling concurrently with crushing poverty, crumbling institutions, rampant discrimination and deep-seated suspicions among ethnic or religious groups. Any one of those maladies on its own is difficult to address, but the mix is combustible and requires a comprehensive approach.

We say that often, but today the Security Council has given that mantra greater definition. The draft presidential statement we will adopt squarely addresses the links between security and development. Moreover, it provides an outline for a comprehensive approach, including several core elements for long-term conflict prevention, including sustainable development, poverty eradication, national reconciliation, good governance, gender equality, the end of impunity, the rule of law and, I would argue, most notably democracy and respect for human rights. Those are the conditions most often found in peaceful societies. Their absence creates conditions conducive to conflict. We ignore them at our peril.

Yet, as we dedicate ourselves to more comprehensive and long-term conflict prevention, we must be mindful that peace, prosperity and democracy cannot be achieved quickly or endure if imposed from outside. The solutions to the root causes of conflict must be home-grown. The United Nations cannot do what others must do for themselves, but it can play an indispensable supporting role.

The United Nations has vital conflict prevention work to do on five fronts in particular. The first is early warning, information and analysis. The United Nations system has a significant presence in many countries where the conditions conducive to conflict are rife. The United Nations is thus well-placed to provide early warning of potential concerns and to help us better understand and anticipate what makes each situation unique. Too often, we resort to cookie-cutter solutions, as if each case were the same as the last, because we do not know enough and we are reacting too late. The United Nations knowledge should help us to act earlier and smarter.

But the United Nations itself sometimes struggles to find the best experts, and itself has limits to its knowledge and information-gathering capabilities. The United Nations must therefore work more closely with Governments, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations, academics and other capable actors based on their comparative advantages. To be truly effective, it must be able to draw upon all sources of information.

Secondly, we need vigorous, sustained diplomacy and mediation to prevent violence or its escalation. Intensive diplomatic efforts by the Secretary-General, his senior envoys and key staff in the field can pull adversaries back from the brink, especially when backed by a united international community. The United States continues to strongly support the robust use of the Secretary-General's good offices and special political missions to avert war. We strongly support efforts to build and strengthen the cadre of seasoned envoys. We welcome the United Nations recent efforts to work together with regional envoys and independent mediators when helpful. We urge the United Nations and other international actors to recruit more women as envoys, special representatives and chiefs of field missions.

Thirdly, diplomacy requires leverage, and that means both carrots and sticks. The credible threat of consequences for aggressors and others who refuse to abide by their international commitments should include, when necessary, the imposition of targeted sanctions. Effective mediation does not mean just listening to all sides; it also means acting firmly when needed so as to back diplomatic efforts. Here, the

Security Council has a particular responsibility, including helping to mobilize wider political support for diplomatic efforts and moving swiftly in the face of emergencies.

Fourthly, societies emerging from conflict continue to face the greatest risk of more bloodshed, even with the presence of peacekeepers. Peace operations are on the front lines of United Nations prevention efforts, and they must be thought of accordingly. We should cease to make false distinctions between peacekeeping and prevention. In fact, they are inextricably linked. The investments we make to strengthen the ability of peacekeepers to detect breakdowns in a peace process, to sound the alarm bells in times of crisis and to quickly redeploy forces to dangerous hotspots are indeed investments in conflict prevention.

Fifthly, while the United Nations and other actors can do a great deal through diplomacy and peacekeeping operations, our long-term objective must be to enable countries to prevent conflicts by themselves. The United Nations, together with regional organizations and the wider international community, must help countries to walk the long, difficult road from war to peace. We support making greater use of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in more countries rattled by conflict. The high-level review of international civilian peacebuilding capacities commissioned by the Secretary-General contains many good ideas and we look forward to their prompt implementation.

All these instruments can save lives. They provide hope and, when employed effectively, can make a meaningful difference in the world. But they require us to overcome our differences and unite behind a common resolve in the Chamber. So let us summon the political will to confront the atrocities unfolding before our eyes, from Syria to Southern Kordofan. Let us revitalize our will and ability to prevent conflicts before embers start to blaze.

The President (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Yang Jiechi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, to take the floor.

Mr. Yang Jiechi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): It gives me great pleasure to attend this high-level meeting of the Security Council on diplomacy. I wish to thank Lebanon for its initiative and the efforts it has made to make this meeting possible.

Over 60 years ago, world leaders jointly established the United Nations, with a view to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. They made a solemn commitment in the Charter to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. That has given us both theoretical guidance and a basis for action in conducting preventive diplomacy and preventing the outbreak of conflicts. Over the past six decades, the United Nations has actively promoted the concept of preventive diplomacy and put it into practice, making important contributions to defusing tension, resolving hotspot issues and restoring regional peace and stability.

Our world today is undergoing profound and complex changes. The international situation on the whole is stable, yet regional hotspot issues keep emerging, and traditional and non-traditional security threats are intertwined. The new situation requires us to have a keener appreciation of the importance of preventive diplomacy and to employ diverse means to add new impetus to the United Nations efforts in the area of preventive diplomacy so that it can contribute more to maintaining international peace and security. Here, I would like to make a four-point proposal on United Nations preventive diplomacy under the new circumstances.

First, we should pay greater attention to prevention and early warning. The successful experiences of the United Nations in the past have shown that it would be doubly rewarding to forestall the outbreak and spread of conflicts with prompt and appropriate actions at an early stage of a crisis. The United Nations should truly change the mindset of prioritizing treatment over prevention and the practice of prioritizing peacekeeping over mediation. There should be more input into early-warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and peace mediation. This will help save resources, improve efficiency and protect people from the scourge of war. The Secretary-General and regional offices of the United Nations have a bigger role to play in preventive diplomacy.

Secondly, we should adopt an integrated strategy and seek to address the root causes of conflict. Conflicts in today's world differ from each another in nature, and the causes for disputes are increasingly

complicated. The United Nations should formulate a comprehensive, scientific and effective strategy on preventive diplomacy. We may use such measures as good offices, mediation and negotiation to mitigate crises. At the same time, we should increase input into development, particularly development in Africa. Only by helping the countries concerned achieve economic growth, social progress and sustainable development and eliminate the underlying economic and social causes of conflicts can we fundamentally prevent conflicts. The United Nations, and the Peacebuilding Commission in particular, has made some positive efforts in recent years. They should continue to explore new ideas and new practices in this regard.

Thirdly, we should enhance communication and coordination and bring into full play the strengths of all parties. Preventive diplomacy is a multidimensional task and cannot be achieved without the support and coordination of all sides. In recent years, the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa have played an important role in mediating hotspot issues in Africa. Their success shows that regional and subregional organizations have unique political, moral and geographic advantages in preventing and resolving local conflicts. The United Nations, particularly the Security Council, should strengthen cooperation with these organizations and fully realize their initiative in using their unique strengths to actively engage in preventive diplomacy. Other countries that can influence the parties to a conflict should also play their due role.

Fourthly, we should make use of all available resources to build strong synergies. The work of the United Nations covers a wide range of areas, and the entities and agencies within the United Nations system all have their respective and clearly defined mandates. The United Nations as a whole is endowed with rich resources and unique overall strengths. We hope that the United Nations will coordinate its resources and work in various areas, fully utilize the expertise of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and other organs, and make good use of the resources of the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme and other specialized agencies, programmes and funds. We hope the United Nations will encourage all sides to enhance exchanges and coordination so as to build synergies and conduct preventive diplomacy more effectively. We support the Secretary-General in playing a more active role in coordinating the efforts of all agencies.

As early as 2,000 years ago, the Chinese people put forward the concept of guarding against potential dangers and the idea that peace is of supreme value. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China has always advocated peace, development and cooperation in the United Nations and the Security Council and has exerted great efforts for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention. On the basis of our practice over the years, we are more convinced than ever that the peaceful settlement of disputes, as one of the basic principles of the United Nations Charter, remains highly relevant under the new circumstances. It is a principle that should continue to be respected and upheld. Preventive diplomacy deserves more attention and input.

Let us work together to reaffirm the solemn commitments made by the older generation of leaders in the United Nations Charter, enable the United Nations and the Security Council to better meet threats and challenges and strive for a world of common security and enduring peace.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. S. M. Krishna, Minister for External Affairs of the Republic of India, to take the floor.

Mr. Krishna (India): I would like to begin by congratulating Lebanon on its presidency of the Security Council this month. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, for personally presiding over this very important event. It is indeed an honour to participate in the discussions today and to convey to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Security Council, the good wishes of my Government. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/552) and his recommendations on the use of preventive diplomacy by the United Nations.

If properly used, preventive diplomacy could become an essential element in the global community's response to some of the major challenges facing the international system today, and could help in conflict prevention.

The adoption of the Charter of the United Nations was supposed to herald the beginning of a new chapter in international relations. One of the purposes of the

United Nations, as elaborated in Chapter I, Article 1, paragraph 1 of the Charter, was to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

The Charter therefore stresses the importance of the adjustment or settlement of disputes by peaceful means, which include negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement and resort to regional agencies or arrangements.

Over the last six decades, peaceful interventions by the United Nations have helped defuse a number of conflict situations on a number of occasions. These interventions, wherever they are undertaken with impartiality, fairness and equity, have earned the United Nations a reputation for effective mediation. The challenge before the international community is to build on this legacy and ensure that peaceful means for the settlement of disputes remain relevant to current realities.

Contemporary threats to international peace and security differ qualitatively from those prevalent six decades ago. Conventional war has been overtaken by intra-State and even borderless violence. Low-intensity conflict, non-State actors and the terrorist-criminal-drug-trafficking nexus threaten international stability and progress. It is recognized that such conflicts are extremely complicated and require complex solutions. Unfortunately, recent developments seem to indicate a worrying trend towards increased reliance on the use of force as a mechanism for resolving some of these conflicts.

The limitations of using force too frequently and too quickly are many. Any respite that coercion brings about in the absence of a political settlement is likely to be only short-lived. Efforts at peaceful settlement of disputes may also suffer if force is used prematurely and without adequate deliberation. Very frequently, a demonstration of a lack of patience in persisting with peaceful efforts is also likely to play into the hands of those who want these conflicts to persist.

The use of force also leads to collateral damage. Such damage, whether human or material, has unpredictable effects on political conflict resolution processes while creating moral or normative dilemmas. In many places, the use of force has prolonged conflicts, a situation where the cure turned out to be worse than the disease itself. The international community must not show undue eagerness to use coercive arrangements in its hurry to bring peace.

We are often reminded of the shortcomings and limitations of diplomacy and the need to intervene. It is important, however, to remember that the tragic events of the past that are cited to justify intervention took place not because dialogue was ineffective but because of a lack of will on the part of the international community to act. Such failures do not in any way detract from the soundness of the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes or its means as mentioned in the Charter itself.

Of course, it goes without saying that the peaceful method is the more difficult one. The great Indian Emperor Ashoka noted three millennia ago that to do good is difficult. Preventive diplomacy takes time and commitment. It requires a clear understanding of the nature and context of the conflict and the ability to discern realistic solutions. It requires the involvement of the various stakeholders affected by conflict. It needs to incorporate forces for stability and progress into a particular situation.

The foremost responsibility of sovereign States is the protection of their populations. It is also their primary responsibility to prevent conflict. Thus, actions undertaken within the framework of conflict prevention by United Nations entities must be designed to support and complement, as appropriate, the conflict-prevention roles of national Governments.

India has always opposed and will continue to oppose the use of force as a primary reaction to conflict. As the major troop-contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping operations, we are more familiar than most with the limitations of force. We note, however, that peacekeepers, who are also early peacebuilders, are being asked to do more with less. This resource gap must be addressed. The inability of the international community to match its mandates with resources ultimately affects the credibility of the Security Council and its authority in resolving disputes.

There really is no sustainable alternative to political processes and the principle that the primary focus of the United Nations should be facilitating a political settlement. Coercive measures should be avoided and used as a measure of last resort, implemented with extreme care and caution. Decisions

to use force should be free of political motives. The humanitarian imperative of providing succour to the suffering should not be used to further one's political objectives. That does humanitarianism and diplomacy a great disservice. Moreover, there are very good reasons why international law is based on the principle of consent. Efforts to circumvent this process are not prudent and cannot be expected to address the drivers of conflict on an enduring basis.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the time-tested principles of national consent, impartiality, fairness and equity in all conflict-prevention activities that the United Nations may undertake.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Minister for External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, to take the floor.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): Let me start by expressing my satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council and by conveying President Dilma Rousseff's regret at being unable to attend today's debate. She asked that I transmit her respectful greetings and congratulations for having chosen this important topic for our high-level meeting.

The subject of this meeting allows us to call attention to the diplomatic instruments available for the promotion of peace in a world where we often witness a tendency to hasten towards coercion, sanctions and military intervention. Today's debate helps us to underline the priority role that the peaceful settlement of disputes must have in achieving the central goal of the United Nations, which is the promotion of international peace on the legal basis provided by the Charter.

Brazil has inscribed the principle of the peaceful resolution of controversies in its Constitution. We believe that peace results from collective efforts in favour of building just societies. We have underscored the interdependence between peace, security and development. We know from experience that stability and security are seldom achieved where there is social exclusion. I was particularly pleased to hear Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's comment yesterday, when he said that "development is ultimately the best prevention" (*A/66/PV.11*). The promotion of socio-economic development and the creation of political opportunities to allow every country to fulfil its potential are indispensable elements in any agenda for preventive diplomacy — and, by extension, in any agenda for peace.

In Brazil, we are committed to fighting poverty and improving governance. In our region, the Union of South American Nations is consolidating itself as a zone of peace, cooperation and democracy. We know, however, that irrespective of how developed regional cooperation becomes, we will always need a functional and effective multilateral system. It cannot be repeated too often that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for promoting international peace and security.

It behoves the Security Council to find solutions that can both resolve the challenges posed by specific situations of crisis and, at the same time, strengthen the multilateral system itself. Recent episodes have shown us the limits of military action as a means for promoting stability, as well as the inappropriateness of using force preventively or pre-emptively. Yesterday, we took note of President Obama's statement that "the tide of war is receding" (*A/66/PV.11*). We might emphatically add that we must usher in a tide of diplomacy, dialogue and prevention.

The prevention of conflict and preventing its escalation can be strengthened through many different tools. Peacekeeping operations are valuable instruments. The Peacebuilding Commission can play an important role in staving off the recurrence of conflict. I agree with the Prime Minister of Portugal when he speaks of the mutually reinforcing triad of prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. But let us not forget that disarmament and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction will also greatly enhance our capacity to avoid conflict. While we would not disagree with those who associate poverty with conflict and tension, let us not forget that, historically, it is the very powerful militarily that have wrought destruction on the widest scale.

As many have pointed out today, in order to fully discharge its role in the field of peace and security, the United Nations must support and promote women's participation in national and international political processes. President Dilma Rousseff stressed our commitment to that goal in her speech to the General Assembly yesterday. Unfortunately, however, women are still underrepresented in the different stages and activities of the diplomatic agenda for peace.

We live in a time marked by mass demonstrations in the Arab world, where a young generation demands effective participation in the political future of their countries and societies. From the beginning, Brazil has not only stood with those who call for freedom of expression and institutional progress, but has also steadfastly promoted peaceful means to address the tensions brought about by those processes. At the same time, we have called for respect for international law and underlined the need to fully respect the decisions of the Security Council, in particular when Chapter VII has been invoked.

Fulfilling our responsibility in the realm of prevention involves favouring mediation, the good offices of the Secretary-General and, at all times, giving priority to the full range of instruments to peacefully resolve differences, including giving due consideration to regional organizations and refraining from loose interpretations of Security Council mandates. I think that the Council needs to take careful note of the statement of President Zuma of South Africa when he mentioned that the African Union was widely sidelined in recent situations that have been brought to the attention of the Council.

The wave of change that has swept the Middle East and Northern Africa lends an even greater sense of urgency to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a State of their own. Defusing this enormous focus of tension and instability through a two-State solution and through due respect for Israel's right to live in peace and security can indeed, and should, be portrayed as a way of advancing the concept of preventive diplomacy.

The exercise of preventive diplomacy requires that the Council participate effectively in defusing tensions of varying degrees of intensity. In other words, the Council will not be fulfilling its role if it avoids the potentially most destabilizing situations. Let us not forget that resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) were consensus decisions of this body. They remain inescapable references for the future of peace in the Middle East.

Brazil expresses its expectation that the Security Council will show greater leadership in helping to bring about, through dialogue and diplomacy, a just and lasting peace to the Middle East. As President Sarkozy stated yesterday,

(*spoke in French*)

> "we must stop thinking that a single country, even the biggest one, or even a small group of countries, can alone resolve a problem of such complexity. Such an approach sidelines too many major players" (*A/66/PV.11*).

(*spoke in English*)

Updating the composition of the Security Council in order to better reflect the realities of the world today will greatly contribute to the strengthening of our preventive capacity. Meanwhile, dialogue, persuasion, diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts will continue to be the guiding principles of my country's conduct in the Council and the Organization, where our collective responsibility will require that additional and more sustained efforts be invested in prevention as a broad approach towards lasting peace.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Guido Westerwelle, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, to take the floor.

Mr. Westerwelle (Germany): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2011/552) and his instructive briefing today. Let me make three points.

First, it falls squarely within the responsibility of the Security Council to prevent conflicts from occurring wherever possible. In fact, it is one of its central tasks. Conflict prevention is one of the chief obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. It is the most efficient and cost-effective way of promoting international peace and security. Effective conflict prevention can avoid loss of life, population displacements and economic chaos. Working on improving prevention is therefore both a humanitarian and a strategic necessity. Over the years, the Security Council has considerably improved its tools to shoulder that responsibility. Agreeing on the right instrument from the broad spectrum available is a crucial task and challenge for the Council.

At this point, allow me to add some remarks on the current situation in Syria. Every day, peaceful demonstrators are brutally repressed and innocent civilians are killed. This has to stop. The Council should send a strong and urgent message to the leadership in Damascus in order to prevent the continued senseless killing of people.

In our view, early warning is of key importance to prevent escalation. We welcome the fact that the Security Council has been increasingly prepared to tackle new threats and situations of incipient conflict. That is the way forward.

Secondly, in addition to operational improvements, we also need a long-term structural perspective. Part of the Security Council's responsibility for conflict prevention is the need to look at long-term threats to global security. To take one example, it is our conviction that understanding the implications of climate change for international peace and security will be essential to prevent escalation in many future crises.

Aside from facing these new threats, the best prevention of conflicts remains respect for human rights and economic development. There can be true peace, sustainable development and shared prosperity only when human rights are respected. A credible fight against impunity can also have a preventive effect.

Thirdly, the Security Council cannot do this alone. As stated in the Charter, the Security Council shall encourage pacific settlement of disputes also through regional arrangements. There has been a notable growth in mediation efforts by regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the European Union. Regional expertise needs to be heard when dealing with conflicts in a particular region. Germany has therefore always underscored the central importance of the Arab League's stance on the developments in its region over the last half-year.

The European Union has assumed its regional and global responsibilities. The European Union actively participates in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It has developed its own instruments for enhancing stability and consolidating peace, including crisis-management missions and diplomatic initiatives. It also supports the African Union and the United Nations in their efforts to bring peace. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will be key to further improving capacities and tools to deal with prevention. The civilian capacities review also aims at making better use of existing mediation capacities in Member States.

None of these efforts can replace direct talks among the actors involved. We cannot make peace in their place, but we can encourage the forces of reason, reconciliation and compromise. Mediation can be a very useful tool in this regard. Establishing a culture of prevention is a question of political will, first and foremost that of parties directly affected. The international community has to lend its support wherever possible. Developing a culture of prevention is also a question of the political participation of those affected, in particular women. Women should be at the core of prevention and sustaining peace.

We fully support the conclusions drawn by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2011/552), notably with a view to building integrated partnerships on all levels and improving early warning mechanisms. We also need to adopt a long-term perspective regarding new challenges to peace and security. I conclude by expressing my delegation's support for the draft presidential statement to be adopted today.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I invite His Excellency Mr. Sven Alkalaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to take the floor.

Mr. Alkalaj (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I would like to thank His Excellency President Sleiman of Lebanon, as well as the delegation of Lebanon, for organizing this high-level meeting of the Security Council. I would also like to thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his insightful remarks.

The topic we are discussing today represents one of the most important issues for determining the further course of action of the United Nations pertaining to the prevention of conflict. Today, we are seeing a significant number of crises and new global challenges that have the potential to pull entire regions into violence and consequently become a challenge to international peace and security. In such a fragile security environment, conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as the founding purposes of the United Nations and pillars of its Charter, represent the main tools at our disposal.

The United Nations was founded as an Organization that would act not only to prevent conflicts between nations and avert future wars, but also to strengthen cooperation among its Members. Entrusted with the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council needs to optimize the use of its preventive diplomacy tools.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has shared the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security through its membership in the Security Council. We will stay fully committed to this course. There is no doubt that in recent times, the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, have recognized the crucial importance of preventive diplomacy. The question is: Can we make improvements in this regard? I think that we can and that we should.

I will echo the words that I said exactly two years ago after the election of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Security Council. We believe that, based on the case of my country, Bosnia and Herzegovina is going to be a strong voice for preventive diplomacy and try to follow up early warning signs anywhere in the world with the utmost sensitivity. This approach is more important today than it was two years ago, and today's debate is a clear evidence of that.

Reacting after a crisis has already started is always a less efficient and less cost-effective method for preserving peace and security. However, we have to keep in mind that there is no universal solution that can be applied to all crises; rather, each particular case requires our full attention.

A number of regional and subregional organizations have become more active in their role as partner to the United Nations in the area of preventive diplomacy. This reflects a growing conviction that emerging crises should be addressed in appropriate international forums. The development and improvement of early warning systems, creating mechanisms for rapid response, the establishment of prevention structures and the use of the Secretary-General's special envoys, groups of friends and fact-finding missions all have crucial roles to play in preventive diplomacy capacities. We support the strengthening of the strategic dialogue between United Nations and regional organizations and a more regular exchange of views and information in order to enable the Council to make adequate decisions. Regional organizations are often better informed than their international counterparts for the early detection of crises.

Despite of all the efforts and readiness of the international community to assist in conflict prevention, I wish to underline that the willingness of the stakeholders involved in political processes in the field to preserve peace remains the most crucial element. The durability of peace agreements can be achieved only by assisting national counterparts in building the foundations for sustainable peace and addressing the root causes of conflict, as well as developing nationally owned institutions that can prevent conflict through dialogue.

Today, I want to reaffirm my county's commitment to strengthening the international capacity for preventive diplomacy in the interest of peace, security and development. Bosnia and Herzegovina stands ready to support those efforts.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I invite the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to take the floor.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Lebanese initiative to convene a Council meeting is dedicated to one of the most important challenges of global politics today. The current state of international relations, as failure to resolve long-standing conflicts and the emergence of hotbeds of instability have aggravated the threat to global security, urgently calls for collectively agreed work in conflict prevention and the pooling of the efforts of all major members of the international community.

To avoid further shocks, international efforts must refocus from reacting to outbreaks of conflicts throughout the world to developing a comprehensive strategy to prevent the initial causes of conflict, ensuring long-term political stability and socio-economic development, to which I would add the challenges of counteracting global and cross-border threats and challenges, above all international terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, organized crime and the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

In the past few years, the United Nations, through its Security Council and the Secretary-General, together with many regional and subregional organizations, has done significant work in identifying the reasons for and helping to prevent conflicts. Yet fast, radical solutions to large-scale problems in this area do not exist. The successful containment of conflicts depends on a systemic application of early warning instruments, using the capabilities of preventive diplomacy, mediation and good offices missions. Strengthening the capabilities of the United Nations is one of the most important thrusts in the

reform of the Organization, and priority attention should be paid to it.

To ensure the success of our work in this very important area, we need to observe a number of conditions. First of all, there is no room for double standards dictated by short-term political circumstances or the preferences of particular States. Why are efforts undertaken with regard to some countries to establish a political process and a national dialogue — for example, in Yemen — while sanctions are imposed on the incumbent Governments of other States whose opposition is primed for confrontation?

Secondly, bearing in mind that the majority of conflicts are intra-State, it is very important to understand that interference in domestic political processes, regardless of the position of the receiving parties, hardly answers the interests of long-term stabilization. The experience of Iraq and Libya are eloquent testimonies to the fact that, in the end, only the people themselves can determine the fate of their countries, and external armed intervention in internal conflicts creates the risk of a spiralling confrontation in those parts of the world.

Regarding the Middle and Near East, we can affirm that such a scenario will, inter alia, reduce the prospects for a settlement of the Palestinian problem. If that is not solved, it will be a strong source of fuel for extremist propensities in the region.

Today's conflicts cannot be resolved by force. There can be no ambiguity about that. Success in resolving crisis situations resides in a painstaking collective search for political and diplomatic solutions, and a thorough and inclusive dialogue to address long-standing problems and ensure stable political development in those countries.

Developments in the world show the growing role of mediators in preventing and settling conflicts. Their work requires great skill and, most importantly, patience. We continue to see the need for good offices missions of the Secretary-General and his special envoys. We have all borne witness to the important mediation efforts of the Quartet to find ways to resolve the Middle East situation; the United Nations in the negotiating process between the Cypriot communities; the High-level African Union panel in the Sudan; Qatar in the Darfur settlement process; and Egypt and other States in the area of intra-Palestinian reconciliation.

The responsiveness and effectiveness of the United Nations anti-crisis machinery reside in its peacekeeping missions. We do not support increasingly popular assignment to peacekeeping missions of protection of civilians and delivery of humanitarian assistance tasks. As important as those roles are, we must not forget the fundamental functions of peacekeepers as facilitators of political process and the maintenance of peace and security in their areas of deployment.

We are prepared to continue to support peacekeeping operations. We believe it necessary to pay particular attention to increasing the military expertise of the Security Council and stepping up the work of the Military Staff Committee in conducting, in particular, systemic analyses of the military and political situations in problem areas of the world.

Important challenges in helping post-conflict countries are handled by the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, whose coordinating and mobilizing we fully support. We believe that the efforts being made to improve the United Nations civilian capability and the deployment of civilian contingents in post-conflict regions are steps in the right direction.

A significant role belongs to the Secretariat, which must be responsible for monitoring and analysing situations in different regions, forecasting the development of crises, planning and expeditiously informing the Security Council about potential outbreaks of conflict.

The crises of the past year have helped open up the potential of regional organizations in the prevention and political settlement of conflicts. The African Union has shown its mediation capabilities in the Sudan, Burundi and Madagascar and was ready to do more in Libya. In line with this African example, we see good possibilities for partnerships between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which are increasing their political authority and contribution and strengthening regional and international security.

We believe it extremely important that, as we continue to actively rely on Chapter VIII of the Charter, making use of the possibility of strong regional organizations capable of assuming more responsibility for situations in their regions will allow the United Nations to be more focused on addressing

global questions in the interests of the entire international community.

We support the practice of establishing United Nations regional centres for preventive diplomacy as effective instruments for identifying and preventing conflicts, as well as in developing regional interaction. We appreciate the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia and its Head, Mr. Miroslav Jenča, based on the principles of neutrality, objectivity and cooperation with the Governments of the States of Central Asia and aimed at interacting with regional integration organizations, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Community, CSTO and SCO.

We share the opinion of the Secretary-General about the importance of interaction with representatives of civil society, parliaments, business groups and academics so as to keep a hand on the pulse of, and to monitor on a regular basis, the development of potential conflict situations.

It is an acknowledged fact that conflict prevention in all respects is much less costly than subsequent settlement efforts. The material and intellectual investment of the international community in early warning and in strengthening the United Nations potential for peace mediation, political analysis and assessment of conflict situations will be money well spent.

The Russian Federation supports the Lebanese delegation's draft presidential statement.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Council has before it the text of a draft presidential statement on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2011/18.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council has thus concluded its deliberations.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.